

**The Knowledge Bank at The Ohio State University**  
**Ohio State Engineer**

**Title:** The Bookshelf Speaks

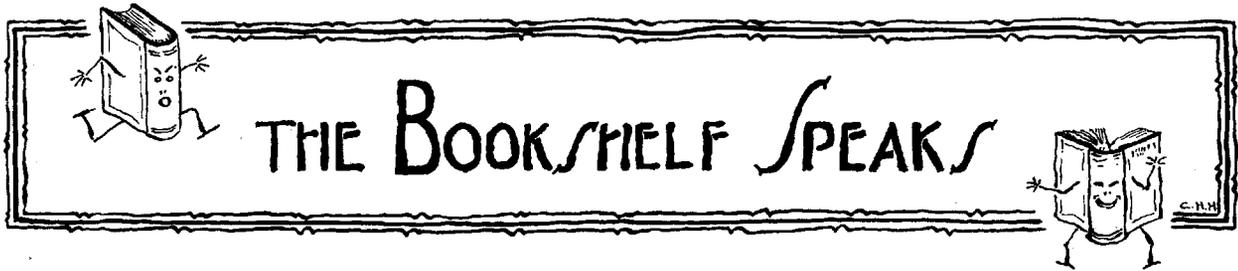
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**T**HE old year having done its best, or worst, and then drifted carefully away, it seems that a new year has decided to come and stay in the old one's place. This is an admirable state of affairs, since it is not at all convenient to be without a year of some sort, and the professional optimists are blatantly prophesying a year of high scores, many shekels, more and better—well we must draw the line somewhere, and besides this is not an add for even so much as a sport roadster. We'll say this much for the old year though, when it dried up it had the decency to blow away.

Did you ever stop to think of the possibilities of using dots (or periods, they're almost alike) when you're writing a composition, a letter or that most difficult of all things to write, a criticism of a course for some instructor (young) who thinks that his students will tell him exactly what they think of his methods, and other things? It might start in this fashion:

Dear Mr. Blank, your course in Blank No. 400 is . . . . . Get the idea? Michael Arlen gives a whole page to the use of dots by novelists, criticizing them quite severely, and then finds that the only way out of a difficult situation is to use a row of dots. This is in one of several short stories in his latest book, *May Fair*, and is called "A Romance In Old Brandy." The book is made up of eleven short stories written about the same group of people, who have an amusing mixture of London and New York airs. The present attitude of Europe towards Americans is somewhat ridiculed by Arlen throughout the whole book. It is entertaining and very pleasant to read however. If you would like something to read between classes try Arlen's *May Fair*.

Another recent novel which will give you something to think about and to enjoy is A. S. M. Hutchinson's last work, *One Increasing Purpose*. Mr. Hutchinson is already familiar to most of the engineers, having written "Once Aboard The Ligger" and "If Winter Comes." In *One Increasing Purpose* Mr. Hutchinson acquaints us with a very fine character, Sim, who believed that he had a certain mission in the world. How he tried for a long time to find out just what his mission was and how he finally found his mission and fulfilled it makes a very interesting story. This is not enough to recommend taking good time from things important to read merely the plot. What makes the book worth our time though is the philosophy which it sets forth, in discussing the present industrial relations, which we think are more interesting to engineers than some other parts of the book. The fine character of Sim is worth some of our time, too, so we would say that the book is worth reading on several scores. The style shows very well the present trend of methods of writing, but of course they may see the error of their ways some time, so for the present we will excuse them.

Another book occupying a ringside seat at campus reading circles is "Glorious Apollo," by E. Barrington. This is a working over of Lord Byron's life, the same requiring considerable skill of omission in order to be at all polite. Barrington does do some worthwhile things with his material, strange as it may seem. He

tells of a wonderful sacrifice made by Lord Byron, and gives all the credit that is due to Byron's final resolve to be a hero and so win the respect of the nobility of England. The fact that Byron had the most licentious ancestry of any of the nobility of England was advanced, and not without reason, as the chief cause of Byron's streak of perverseness. Byron of course lived up to his ancestor's standard, which by the way seems to be the goal of all honest Englishmen. Barrington it will be remembered wrote "The Chaste Diana" and "The Divine Lady."

Perhaps you have been reading poetry lately? No? Well, we have at last found some poems which sound enough like our line that we do not hesitate to say that you will like them if you care at all for poetry. They were not published lately we'll admit, but that does not alter affairs in the least. When Carl Sandburg wrote "Smoke and Steel" he was a newspaper man connected with the Safety Department of a business magazine and in his official capacity became acquainted with the details of factory machinery. His poems are all full of energy and not a few are filled with slang, for he has always been associated with men who were producers. The poems in *Smoke and Steel* are interesting and easily read and should be of special interest to engineers. Sandburg also wrote "Chicago Poems" and "Cornhuskers," but "Smoke and Steel" is generally admitted to be his best work.

Genius, ability, large flower and taxi bills, and in fact many things are admittedly not appreciated at home. That in all probability is the reason that you are here. The sad part of it is that the excess flower and taxi money often receive more than their share of attention while the others go begging, or to Valley Dale. All of which may or may not be related to our subject, we rest the decision with you.

Last quarter a sizable volume with a most alluring Russian title and an attractive cover turned up one day and proved that the outward appearance was not so very misleading after all. It was "Sashka Jigouloff," written by Leonid Andreyev, who has written Russian stories before, judging from this example. The story is fairly interesting although somewhat pessimistic, but not unbearably so and quite readable. The story deals with a young Russian, the son of a general under the Czar, whose youth and early training were apparently almost perfect, whose ideals were of the highest type, but who was carried away by his own pessimism and the crafty knavery of a Socialist and finally became a robber and a murderer. Still living in his own atmosphere of unreality and idealism he becomes a notorious bandit, the terror of law and order and the refuge of the most daring criminals. He died the ignominious death of an outlaw, however, being hung by an outraged soldiery. The women characters are very different from the usual run of modern women characters, having all of the attributes of our idea of what a woman should be. While they do not leave a trail of cigarette ashes wherever they go they still do not seem to be entirely out of the game, in fact they are very much in the game and exert an influence that is as unmistakable as it is beautiful.

—W. G. H.